Miyamoto speaks on gaming habits with kids, accessibility in games and more.

Itoi: "I'm not like you," he says to me shyly. "The range of topics I can actually discuss is quite narrow." And yet he continues on.

In part two, Miyamoto-san discusses what questions he wants to pose to the children of today, while mixing in stories of his own children, questioning himself about his own role in contributing to children.

Miyamoto: Makuhari Messe was really booming the other day. I think that's great. This year is the first time we made it a proper show for general visitors, so I was worried about how their response was going to end up. Any other year the people who actually come are just a microcosm of the public - the hardcore, who come with the knowledge that not everything is going to be shown out in the open, so they're always attentive and looking for clues as they observe what's being shown. But this time I saw that a portion of the general market at large had come. Although, I still felt that taking a poll of the audience there with questionnaires would produce biased information - obviously not what we want.

As I was making the rounds on the floor, I reaffirmed the feeling that both parents and children can play games. There were many sets of parents and children playing the games together. Oh, right - and you know how they say that kids "grow out of Nintendo"? I've realized that there's just this period where they leave for a while. I think that they do come along with us for the ride, both

the young and the old. I thought to myself that we really have to value and take good care of that.

But I also saw this little girl, maybe in kindergarten or her first year of elementary school, and her mom was letting her play Perfect Dark. I thought that she probably shouldn't be doing that. (Laughs) The mother's hands over the child's, holding the controller, shooting these characters dead - one after the other. Seeing that with my own eyes, it makes me think.

Also today I got one of these letters from a particular mother. It's been a while. Her kid, currently in their third year of middle school, looks up to me and wants to make games at Nintendo someday. And so all the kid does is plays games, nothing else. So when the parents yell at the kid for that, the response is that, "The game world includes a lot of these deep human elements, so you get a lot more out of games than anything else," and just ignores the parents. So she's asking me to reason with the kid. But I'm still on the fence about whether I should reply. Obviously the kid is wrong (Laughs). But in this day and age, there's nothing a parent can really say if a kid truly believes that. When I hear that kind of thing it makes me think about a lot of different things. Even if it's just, "I wish it wasn't MY game they're talking about!"

And you know, lately I've been questioning how much "my games" are truly "mine." There are just so many. Nintendo's got a lot of titles. At the very least for the titles that I'm developing, I'm making sure not to do anything that would just be a waste of people's time.

For instance, for a racing game or something say you keep playing the same course over and over in order to improve your time 1/100th of a second. In that case I think you need to move on after a reasonable amount of time, even if you don't shorten it the whole 1/100th of a second. Although those kinds of experiences are popular for a long time, and have support. It's so every title we put out doesn't fall into that kind of pattern that we make multi-player competitive

games. When you have four people playing and laughing together, they're all communicating the whole time, so maybe it's not so bad if they're putting a lot of time into playing it. Plus there are less and less places where kids can go out and play these days. Plus it's not necessarily the case that the same kid is always going to win.

My kids tend to have friends over and play competitive multi-player games a lot. Part of me does think they should be playing outside more, but as long as they're all clearly having a blast it's hard to be too upset. (Laughs) But something like an RPG, where you're grinding for hours on end just to raise some stat, doing the same thing over and over, I feel like - isn't that a waste of time? (Laughs)

That, and there's something else that's been on my mind lately. Everybody says that the stories in games are interesting. But they generally don't spend a whole lot of time reading normal novels. Well, I mean, I don't read books a whole lot either, so I can't judge (Laughs). But even so, when I hear something like that I just want to blurt out, "Why not read a novel? Don't you think that would be more interesting?"

And so my kid reads a lot of books, and he's always asking - "Is the story interesting? Would it be more interesting than a book?" My kid isn't necessarily trying to directly compare the two either, but he never goes out of his way to say that a game's story is more interesting. So I think he considers the two types of stories separately. In games, the fun is in proceeding through the game and seeing what's next, after all.

That's why at the Makuhari show recently we figured it would be a great chance to do a questionnaire about Zelda and asked everyone that visited the Zelda display some questions including, "How far did you get?" Of course the problem is that anyone who visits the Zelda

corner is there because they love Zelda, so mostly everyone said that they got all the way to the end. It didn't really work as market research. (Laughs)

I think that about 30 percent or more of all players that bought the game probably stop at Dodongo's Cavern, the Fire Temple or the Shadow Temple. Maybe it's as high as 50 percent, I dunno.

I want to make something where 80 percent to 90 percent of purchasers can make it to the end, even if that means we have to take on the risk that those that do make it that far lose a bit of that feeling of challenge or achievement. Part of me feels that if it's a problem of difficulty, or having to put long hours into the game - if you can't make it all the way to the end then there's no reason to put the volume or difficulty on a pedestal and keep it in at all costs.

But putting it bluntly like that is disrespectful to those that put all of their effort into beating a hard game, so I'm always thinking about how we can make games more interesting, more engaging.

My oldest is currently in his second year of middle school. It was when he got into middle school that he started playing games regularly. Way back when he would borrow my Super Famicom so I was always really strict about time management, but lately he has a 64 and PlayStation of his own and plays it all whenever he wants. Watching him play different games I definitely understand what other parents say about seeing their kids play games and feeling it's a waste of their time. Seeing that with my own eyes, it's made me start to think.

Video games, being the kind of boom that they are, they were a lot of fun when they were this new, novel thing, but those who watch you play the games, at an early stage they see it that the time spent there is unproductive, and I think now those who play games are starting to think, bit by bit that, "Hey, I'm not stupid or anything." And I feel like, as that train of thought begins to escalate more and more, it's not so great doing a job where you focus solely on making games for small kids. I bet you wouldn't be too pleased with me saying this. Naturally it depends on what the game is. So that's why, how do I say this? For whatever it is you make, the maker has to seriously think about what the role of that product is. Also that you're not just thinking about the present, but about five years from now as well. By seriously contemplating that when making

your game, I feel like maybe that game could become a standard - as opposed to being just a fad at best.

The time where a product was really cool just because it was an electronic game is definitely over. I mean, you look around and there's electronic devices everywhere around us. And the age where a toy would sell just because it was so cheap is over, now these toys are super cheap and high tech - so it's no longer just a "toy." I used to think that for instance Space Invaders - a game that we used to be so into back in the day, that a kid that's playing games for the first time now would have to think it's fun, but for a kid that has even had a taste of games - if you have them play Space Invaders they'd no longer say that it's any fun. Video games, they're different from more universal things, they're this product that has come about during what you could call a technological period of transition, so we have to be careful not to make these kinds of games where we only appeal to the kind of player who's willing to sit and get good at the game - I mean, we've sold games before based on their replayability and have called that "gameplay," the kinds of games where it's only stimulating because it's the new thing, we have to overcome that - we have to make games that will become the new standards so that in five years the only people left playing our games aren't just the small few who were able to put the time in and overcome those challenges. This is something I've reaffirmed while I watch my kids play games.

But even more so for adults - adults are actually more selfish, if they get addicted to gambling there's no way to get them to stop, or if a game they like comes out they'll pull an all-nighter to play it, spending all of this unproductive time. I won't say that's a bad thing in every case, but in doing that they are losing the time they have. Time where they could be doing something else. I feel like that's quite a waste. Maybe I shouldn't be thinking about that kind of thing. My parents may have let me run wild growing up, but I was still raised right. (Laughs)

Itoi: So, how did you enjoy part two of our interview with Shigeru Miyamoto? I feel like we've gotten a chance to see a bit inside Miyamoto-san, the father and creator. In part three Miyamoto-san speaks about what being a producer is all about. I hope you look forward to it. Oh right, you wanted to hear about Dolphin. You'll have to wait just a little bit longer for that.